

Acquisition Reform Success Story

Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS)



Program Manager: Colonel Edward G. Taylor
Program Executive Officer: Brig Gen Berwyn Reiter
Contractor: Boeing

Program Description

The Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) Program Office acquires and sustains E-3 AWACS and 767 AWACS weapon systems for the USAF and foreign customers. Utilizing Integrated Weapon System Management (IWSM), the System Program Director has full responsibility for the procurement, modifications, and support of the US and Foreign customer E-3 fleets.

How Streamlining Made a Difference

AWACS has aggressively embraced the philosophy of Acquisition Reform. Transitioning from traditionally bounded programs featuring high program costs, long “to contract” times, and low customer satisfaction, to a program office noted for its innovative and progressive approach to doing business. Beginning with the 767 Japan Program, AWACS changed the nature of its relationship with its industry partner and began an attack on the self-imposed constraints in the acquisition process. A key feature in this effort was the partnering of the Program Office with the contractor to examine ways in which they could become more efficient and thereby reduce contract costs, shorten “to contract” time and improve the probabilities of creating an executable program, putting capability in the hands of the user quicker. This partnership developed a process we call “One Pass”, which serves as a vehicle to jointly define requirements and eliminate unnecessary iterations. A planned by-product of this enterprise was a mechanism to examine Contract Data Requirements Lists (CDRLs), Military Specifications and Standards, and consciously plan their reduction and possible elimination. The government/contractor partnership has produced impressive results:

Measure	FROM	TO
Time to On Contract	459 days (avg)	180
Contract Data Requirements List	200+	10
Military Specifications & Standards	120	0

FY 96 Results:

Within the last 13 days of September 1996, the AWACS Program awarded 56 contract actions totaling \$64 M, which included \$46 M of expiring funds that had been reprogrammed into AWACS at the beginning of September. The “One Pass” process allowed us to be in a position to use “fall out” funds to benefit our customers. With the “One Pass” process we can meet our customer needs by creating executable programs designed to execute fast and put capability in the hands of the user (doing it *faster*). We’ve demonstrated success in reducing “to contract” time by over 200 days while simultaneously reducing program office oversight costs (doing it *cheaper*).